

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 02913 160721Z
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SSC-01 /080 W
----- 023680 /17

R 160508Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7463
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2913

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR IN NZ
SUBJ: NEW INDIAN AMBASSADOR TO NEW ZEALAND

REF: VIENTIANE 1796

1. INDIAN AMBASSADOR B. DEVA RAO LEFT VIENTIANE DECEMBER 15 EN ROUTE TO HIS NEW POST AT WELLINGTON.
2. DEVA RAO, WHO SPENT THREE YEARS IN VIENTIANE, IS A SHORT MAN WITH LONG HAIR AND A LARGE MOUSTACHE, WHO CONSIDERS HIMSELF AN EXPERT ON PHILOLOGY, THE MOSLEM RELIGION AND IRELAND, AMONG OTHER THINGS. HE IS EXTREMELY TALKATIVE AND HAS TWO RATHER STRIKING MANNERISMS. ONE IS TO HOLD HIS HAND IN FRONT OF HIS MOUTH WHEN HE IS TALKING AND THE OTHER IS TO LET HIS EYELIDS DROP CLOSED AND TIP HIS HEAD BACKWARD TO LOOK OUT FROM THEM DURING CONVERSATION.
3. ALTHOUGH ALWAYS CORRECT AND COURTEOUS IN HIS RELATIONS WITH THIS EMBASSY, HE WAS CRITICAL OF UNITED STATES POLICY IN HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHERS AND CONDUCTED HIMSELF AS A SELF-APPOINTED AGITATOR FOR PRESSURE ON THE UNITED STATES TO GIVE ECONOMIC AID TO LAOS (REFTEL). HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN REGARD TO THE COMMUNIST REGIME IN LAOS WERE EXTREMELY INGRATIATING AND OFTEN COUCHED IN COMMUNIST JARGON. HE WAS NO DOUBT CARRYING OUT HIS GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IN THIS REGARD, BUT HE ALSO IMPRESSED US AS THE SORT OF INDIAN DIPLOMAT WITH
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STRONG CHAMELEON TENDENCIES. WE GUESS THAT IN A DIFFERENT

ATMOSPHERE HE WOULD PROJECT A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT IMAGE.

4. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED AT VIENTIANE BY HIS WIFE, WHO IS MUCH MORE NATURAL AND RELAXED THAN HE, AND BY A TEENAGED SON. CORCORAN

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To: WELLINGTON
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